

HUNTER'S BEACH BROOK BRIDGE

Acadia National Park Roads & Bridges

Spanning Hunter's Beach Brook on Park Loop Road

Seal Harbor Vicinity

Hancock County

Maine

HAER NO. ME-22

HAER  
ME  
5-SEHA.V,  
5-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service

Department of the Interior

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

HUNTERS BEACH BROOK BRIDGE  
[Hunters Brook Bridge]

HAER  
ME  
S-GEHA.V  
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HAER No. ME-22

**LOCATION:** Spanning Hunters Beach Brook on Park Loop Road, 200' northwest of Maine Route 3, Acadia National Park, Mount Desert Island, Seal Harbor vicinity, Hancock County, Maine  
Quad: Seal Harbor Maine  
UTM: 19/561980/4906175

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:** 1940

**DESIGN:** Bureau of Public Roads, U.S. Department of Commerce

**ENGINEER:** Leo Grossman, Associate Highway Engineer, Public Roads Administration, Structural Engineer  
Philip Mabel, Junior Highway Engineer, Public Roads Administration, Resident Structural Engineer

**CONTRACTOR:** W. H. Hinman, Inc., North Anson, Maine

**STRUCTURE TYPE:** Reinforced concrete box culvert and wing walls with stone-faced parapets

**FHWA STRUCTURE NO.:** 1700-021P

**OWNER:** Acadia National Park, National Park Service

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Hunters Beach Brook Bridge carries the Park Loop Road over one of the island's smaller streams. The small structure is unobtrusive, but its stone-faced parapets allow the structure to harmonize with the rugged island landscape.

**PROJECT INFORMATION:** Documentation of the Hunters Beach Brook Bridge is part of the Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges Recording Project, conducted in 1994-95 by the Historic American Engineering Record  
Neil Maher, Historian, 1995  
Richard Quin, HAER Historian, 1996

This is one in a series of reports prepared for the Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges Recording Project. HAER No. ME-11, ACADIA NATIONAL PARK ROADS AND BRIDGES, contains an overview history of the park motor road systems.

#### HISTORY

The Hunters Beach Brook Bridge was constructed to carry the Day Mountain Road segment of the Park Loop Road over its namesake stream in the Black Woods section of Acadia National Park. While Mount Desert Island, on which Acadia National park is located, has an extensive road system, the Park Loop Road was designed as a self-contained closed-loop system separated from local roads by parallel routes or grade separation structures. This was desired in order to separate park visitor travel from commercial and residential traffic on the island.

The bridge was constructed as part of Day Mountain Road Project 9A1 of the Park Loop Road, which also included grading, subgrade reinforcement, installation of drainage structures and bituminous gravel surfacing of a road connecting the Stanley Brook Road and the Otter Cliffs section of the Park Loop Road.<sup>1</sup> The work was carried out under the supervision of the Public Roads Administration, the Depression-era successor to the Bureau of Public Roads. The Bureau of Public Roads became responsible for major road construction and reconstruction projects in the national parks under a 1926 agreement with the National Park Service.

Surveys for the project were begun by the Bureau of Public Roads in March 1937 and conducted until August 1939. Several alternate routes were investigated, and the final location was decided upon by Harold J. Spelman, District Engineer of the Public Roads Administration, Thomas, C. Vint, Chief of the Branch of Plans and Design for the National Park Service, and John D. Rockefeller Jr., who funded much of the construction of the Park Loop Road.<sup>2</sup>

Bids were opened in the Public Road's Administration's Albany, New York district office on 24 August 1939. Work began on 18 September and was completed by May 1941. The Public Roads Administration assigned Associate Highway Engineer Leo Grossman, resident engineer for most of the road work at Acadia National Park, as supervising engineer. Assistant Highway Engineer Philip

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<sup>1</sup>Leo Grossman, Associate Highway Engineer, Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration, District No. 9, "Final Construction Report, 1939-1941, Acadia National Park, Day Mountain Road, Hancock County, Maine, Project No. 9A1, Account No. 5663" (Albany, New York: Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration), 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 11.

Mabel was resident engineer for the bridge construction. Although designed by the Bureau of Public Roads, Hunters Beach Brook Bridge was constructed by W. H. Hinman, Inc., of North Anson, Maine.<sup>3</sup> By November 1939, the structure was complete except for the stonework.<sup>4</sup>

Essentially a box culvert with parapet and wing walls, the Hunters Beach Brook Bridge is 51' in length with a 15 foot span. The stone-faced reinforced concrete structure spans the brook on a single shallow segmental arch with a clear span of 16'6" standing 3'6" above the stream. Stone arch radiating voussoirs define the arch. The bridge has a deck width of 30' and carries a two-lane road 21' wide. The stone faced parapet walls extend 1' 10" above the deck. The entire structure is skewed 27°. The Triad-Hunters Brook Trail terminates at the Park Loop Road just north of the bridge on the east side; the trail formerly continued southward along the brook to Hunters Beach, but the section between the bridge and Sea Cliff Road has long been abandoned.

A 1990 inspection of the Hunters Beach Brook Bridge by the Federal Highway Administration determined that the bridge was "deficient or functionally obsolete" and in need of rehabilitation. The bridge safety inspection report recommended an expenditure of \$200 to repair erosion around the wings of the bridge's upstream side, and another \$2,000 to remove sediment that had accumulated against the abutment.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 19.

<sup>4</sup>Grossman to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 14 November 1939. Rockefeller Archives Center, Offices of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 72.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, "Bridge Safety Inspection Report, Park Loop Road Over Hunters Brook, Acadia National Park, Str. No. 1700-021P, Inspected: June 27, 1990," (Sterling, Virginia: Federal Highway Administration, Eastern District Federal Division), 3.

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- Grossman, Leo, Assistant Highway Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, to John D. Rockefeller Jr., 14 November 1939. Rockefeller Archives Center, Offices of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 72.
- "Final Construction Report, 1939-1941, Acadia National Park, Day Mountain Road, Hancock County, Maine, Project No. 9A1, Account No. 5663." Albany, New York: Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration.
- U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. "Bridge Safety Inspection Report, Park Loop Road Over Hunters Brook, Acadia National Park, Str. No. 1700-021P, Inspected: June 27, 1990." Sterling, Virginia: Federal Highway Administration, Eastern District Federal Division.